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STATE

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O 291642Z DEC 88
FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO RUEHFO/USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4213
RUEHUA/AMEMBASSY ANTIGUA IMMEDIATE 4548
RUEHGR/AMEMBASSY GRENADA IMMEDIATE 7083
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN IMMEDIATE 9607
BT
UNCLAS BRIDGETOWN 10581

USIAC

USIA FOR P/M, P/F, P/PFL, AR/DI PALMA, VOA/BX,
VOA/BXN - MEEK, VOA/BRL
STATE FOR ARA/CAR, ARA/P

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: N/A
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: "U.S. ECONOMIC AID TO THE CARIBBEAN"

1. EDITORIAL OF THE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1988 EDITION OF THE MODERATE "THE WEEKEND NATION" (CIRC: 38,660) ENTITLED "FACING UP TO LESS AID AFTER CHRISTMAS". (NOTE: IDENTICAL EDITORIAL RAN IN THE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1988 EDITION OF THE EC (EASTERN CARIBBEAN) NEWS, (CIRC: 12,000)). BEGIN EXCERPTS:

2. "IN THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE OF CHRISTMAS MERRIMENT, IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT EVEN SOME LEADERS OF GOVERNMENTS IN THIS REGION MAY HAVE MISSED THE WARNING FROM TWO U.S. CONGRESSMEN OF THE PROBABILITY OF LESS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM AMERICA IN 1989.

3. "THE WARNINGS CAME LAST WEEK FROM CONGRESSMAN DANTE FASCELL, CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATOR BOB GRAHAM, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE DEVELOPED A REPUTATION FOR BEING VERY SYMPATHETIC TO THE NEEDS OF THE CARIBBEAN.

4. "..... RESOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM (U.S. BUDGET DEFICIT) HAS, ACCORDING TO A RECENT POLL, PLACED THE CARIBBEAN-CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION IN A LOW PRIORITY POSITION FOR U.S. ECONOMIC AID.

5. "..... AT A TIME WHEN THIS REGION REMAINS UNDERSTANDABLY NERVOUS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF VITAL EXPORTS LIKE SUGAR AND BANANAS - MAJOR SOURCES OF EMPLOYMENT AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE - NOT TO MENTION THE PROBLEMS BEING FACED IN THE MARKETING OF ITS RUM AND GARMENTS, ANY FURTHER REDUCTION IN U.S. ECONOMIC AID COULD ONLY SPREAD GLOOM AND DEEPEN FEARS OF SOCIAL EXPLOSIONS IN CARICOM MEMBER STATES.

6. "IN VIEW OF THE WARNING OF A POSSIBLE 25 PERCENT

Replaced Sen Graham HFAC

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REDUCTION IN THE GLOBAL U.S. FOREIGN AID PROGRAMME FOR 1989, UNCERTAINTIES HAVE INCREASED OVER THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE LEGISLATION - THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT - PRESENTED EARLIER THIS YEAR BY CONGRESSMAN GEORGE CROCKETT JUN. FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE CARIBBEAN.

7. "WITH THE HOPE THAT OUR WORSE FEARS IN RELATION TO FOREIGN TRADE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE ARE NOT REALISED IN 1989, WE EXTEND SINCERE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL OF OUR READERS". END EXCERPTS. LEE
END OF MESSAGE UNCLASSIFIED

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